



A Blessing In Disguise

Those who face hardship often emerge winners, says MAULANA WAHIDUDDIN KHAN, answering readers' questions on God, faith, rituals, emotions and human failings

Do we need to redefine religion?

Khalid Ansari, New Delhi

■ Yes. But redefinition does not mean revision. Redefinition means describing the old teachings in the modern idiom. That is, reapplying religious values to the new lifestyle.

What is the importance of ritual?

Sonika Goswami, New Delhi

■ Ritual is the outer form of worship. The body of a human being is important, but without the inner spirit, the body is almost lifeless. By this example, you can understand the significance of rituals.

A sensitive individual gets easily upset. What should he do?

Aysha Zakwan, New Delhi

■ Sensitivity is a boon. It is a positive attribute. Sensitivity makes you aware of subtle emotions and helps you develop your mind. It also saves you from a lot of wrongdoing. But a sensitive person needs to learn the art of sensitivity management. Otherwise he could feel wronged and be upset about it.

What is your view on suffering?

Sufia Khan, New Delhi

■ Suffering is not an evil. There's a

positive side to it. It gives you challenge. It gives incentive to work. It activates one's mind; so suffering is a blessing in disguise. History shows that many of those who faced hardships and disadvantages emerged as achievers. It is rightly said that it is not ease but effort, not facility but difficulty that makes men.

Why is it difficult for us to accept our limitations?

Mridul Sharma, New Delhi

■ It is because we do not apply our mind and are only guided by emotions. If you apply reason and adopt a rational approach, you are more

likely to accept your limitations. Reason will never allow you to ignore your limitations.

According to Islam, what is the purpose of life?

Christine Kholboi, New Delhi

■ According to Islam, Paradise is the goal of every human being. And the purpose of life is to make yourself a deserving candidate in the hereafter.

What is the starting point of a spiritual life?

Bhav Chawla, New Delhi

■ Adopt a simple lifestyle. A simple life leads to spiritual development. A simple lifestyle means saving yourself from unnecessary distractions. These distractions come in the way of spirituality.

How can we find our negative points?

Prateek Raheja, Bhiwani

■ Objective thinking and introspection are the surest ways of discovering your negative points. Negativity goes against man's basic nature. So, when one develops some kind of negativity, his nature tries to reject it. It is this ac-

tion and reaction that creates tension. So, by rejection, your mind already does 50 per cent of the task; you need to do only the rest of the 50 per cent.

What is the source of a strong conviction?

Fayyaz Umri, New Delhi

■ Conviction is very important in life. It is conviction that gives you courage and determination. Without conviction, you cannot achieve anything especially in today's competitive world. And the only source of conviction is trust in God.

How can we feel the existence of God?

A S K Shaikh, Nashik

■ It is possible to feel God's existence through intuition. Of late, science has discovered that there is a unique spot in the human mind — they call it God Spot. The fact is that the consciousness of God is interwoven in the nature of every human being. So, potentially everyone possesses this kind of feeling. What is needed is to turn this potential into the actual through deep contemplation.

Do you think belief in the existence of God is a human need?

Adnan Khan, New Delhi

■ Yes. It's a human urge to find out higher truth, and the higher truth is nothing but the Creator of our world. Without finding the higher truth, one can be satisfied. In that sense, there is no doubt about it.

Do emotions make us weak?

Smaran Harihar, Mumbai

■ No. On the contrary, emotions give us strength. After deciding on something, we need determination to execute it and it is our emotions that give us the determination. But there are two sides to emotions: The positive point is that it gives you incentive to do something; without emotions, we are like robots. The negative aspect is that though it activates you, it does not differentiate between right action and wrong. It's your mind which does the differentiation. ■

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